Calculate_Frustration_Score module 516 will be evaluated. If the attribute RECENT_CONTACTS has state EXCEPTION, DISABLED, or FAILED, then the enabling condition 514 will be False and the Calculate_Frustration_Score module 516 will not be evaluated. If the attribute RECENT_CONTACTS is in state UNINITIALIZED, then enabling condition 514 cannot yet be evaluated. Enabling conditions 518, 522 and 530 are evaluated in a similar manner. The modules 516, 520, 524, 528, and 532 are all represented as solid line hexagons, which indicates that these modules are decision modules and the processing of these modules is specified in terms of computation rules and a combining policy, as will be described in further detail below.--

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IN THE CLAIMS

The following are amended claims without markings.

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1. (Amended) A method for operation of a workflow system for processing an object by executing a plurality of tasks, one or more of said tasks each having one or more associated enabling conditions indicating whether the task is to be executed for said object, and wherein execution of at least one of said tasks results in initiation of a side-effect action performed by a component external to said workflow system, said method comprising the steps of:

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determining whether a task is eligible for eager execution by considering at least (1) a state of the task and (2) whether execution of the task results in the initiation of a side-effect action; and

executing the task using eager execution if the task is determined to be eligible for eager execution.

2. (Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of determining whether a task is eligible for eager execution further comprises the step of:

determining that a particular task whose execution results in the initiation of a side-effect action is eligible for eager execution only if it is determined that the one

or more enabling conditions associated with the particular task will evaluate to true as determined by the state of the particular task.

3. (Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of determining whether a task is eligible for eager execution further comprises the step of:

determining that a particular task whose execution does not result in the initiation of a side-effect action is eligible for eager execution prior to determining that the one or more enabling conditions associated with the particular task will evaluate to true as determined by the state of the particular task.

4. (Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said step of determining whether a task is eligible for eager execution further comprises the step of:

partially evaluating one or more enabling conditions associated with said task.

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5. (Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said step of determining whether a task is eligible for eager execution is performed by also considering (3) whether the task contributes to the production of a target value.

6. (Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

determining that a particular task is unneeded for processing of the object based at least in part on partial evaluation of an enabling condition of a second task, wherein said second task's enabling condition depends on one or more outputs of said particular task.

7. (Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

determining that a particular task is necessary for processing of the object based at least in part on evaluation of enabling conditions for a number of tasks, wherein said tasks' enabling conditions depend on said particular task.

8. (Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

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determining that a particular task is necessary for processing of the object based at least in part on evaluation of enabling conditions for a number of tasks, wherein said tasks' enabling conditions depend on one or more outputs of said particular task.

12. (Amended) A workflow system for processing an object by executing a plurality of tasks, one or more of said tasks each having one or more associated enabling conditions indicating whether the task is to be executed for said the object, and wherein execution of at least one of said tasks results in initiation of a side-effect action performed by a component external to said workflow system, said system comprising:

means for determining whether a task is eligible for eager execution by considering at least (1) a state of the task and (2) whether execution of the task results in the initiation of a side-effect action; and

means for executing the task using eager execution if the task is determined to be eligible for eager execution.

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13. (Amended) The workflow system of claim 12 wherein the means for determining whether a task is eligible for eager execution further comprises:

means for determining that a particular task whose execution results in the initiation of a side-effect action is eligible for eager execution only if it is determined that the one or more enabling conditions associated with the particular task will evaluate to true as determined by the state of the particular task.

14. (Amended) The workflow system of claim 12 wherein the means for determining whether a task is eligible for eager execution further comprises:

means for determining that a particular task whose execution does not result in the initiation of a side-effect action is eligible for eager execution prior to determining that one or more enabling conditions associated with the particular task will evaluate to true as determined by the state of the particular task.